

CO-ORDINATION OF ACTIVITIES FOR INTEGRATION ON THE DIOCESAN LEVEL

by Rev. Claude J. Mulvihill (Canada)

In preparation for this paper, assistance and guidance were sought from other receiving countries as well as from Canada. In all, six have supplied material on this subject, representing fourteen dioceses outside of Canada and their co-ordination of activities for integration have been added to those of Canadian dioceses to help produce this presentation. I would like first to express my deep appreciation to the diocesan and national directors who answered my appeal for information and I have freely used, verbatim at times, the reports given to me. Since the purpose of the Congress is to supply to the participants, knowledge in this field, I propose to use the time allotted to me to present a resume, incorporating all reported data, and therefore, rephrase the subject of this paper to read: «The Ideal of Complete Co-ordination of Activities For Integration on the Diocesan Level».

Before going into the actual co-ordination of work, it is most important to state as a principle what experience has proven to be absolutely true. Integration of the immigrant in a receiving country is a long term process. Migration of human beings is a transplanting from known cultures, languages and customs to new, and often strange surroundings and demands considerable adjustment on the part of the migrant, before a feeling of belonging as a part of the whole community can be realized. Activity in a diocese or parish should never be aimed at placing the immigrant under coercion to unduly hasten this process of integration. Experience has proven that morally and psychologically, sound programming must be the keynote and basis for co-ordination of activity. The objective of Catholic participation in integration and co-ordination of activity for it, is to provide all the necessary assistance to the immigrant so that with the least amount of stress and upset, he can be knit gradually and progressively into the civil and religious life of his new community.

There are two other points to be made as clarification of the content of this paper. First — in speaking of co-ordinated activity for integration we apply this to include all immigrant groups regardless of their ethnic origin or country of departure. Further, it includes as well, those immigrants who move from one diocese to another, provided they still maintain their immigrant status. Secondly — the political, social and economic conditions as well as geographical location of a receiving country are recognized as definite determining factors in the influx of immigrants. These same factors also have a strong bearing on the depth and effectiveness of an integration programme. As proof of this, in the reports submitted to me, if their were present these deciding elements that limited the volume of immigration, there were also present, the difficulties of co-ordinating activities for integration and sometimes accompanying frustration of Directors in their attempts to establish an effective programme. With this in mind, it is hoped that by illustrating a completely co-ordinated scheme of tried methods, we will all be assisted in adopting a unified procedure of action in receiving countries that will be in the best interests of our immigrants, whether they number in the hundreds or thousands. The actions taken on behalf of immigrants

will necessarily vary in intensity and scope but all points mentioned in this paper represent co-ordination that should and must be present on the diocesan level if our immigrants are to know the concern of the Church on their behalf, and find in the Church's interests and activity, a medium for safe and secure integration.

The diocesan immigration services exist as a result of the wish of the Ordinary, to instigate and direct sound programming for integration. An immigrant is a person who comes into a diocese from outside its territory, and therefore, the first step in co-ordination of action on his behalf is actually the contact that must be established beyond its borders. Information must be obtained regarding expected arrivals, composition of migrant groups, etc., moving into the diocese in order that plans can be made for proper reception facilities upon arrival and aftercare in the months that follow. The answer for this need is found when the Directors formulate a working contract with the proper sources for this information. Normally, receiving countries have a National Catholic Immigration service whose charge is to supply to its constituents the assistance in this area.

Through reception services at ports of entry this initial knowledge of immigrant landing is obtained and final destination is determined. The forwarding of basic information to the diocese concerned, establishing of a wire service, if indicated, must be worked out between the national and local church organizations. If the volume of immigration warrants it, communication directly with the overseas Catholic agency in the sending countries can be most useful (to its counter-part in the receiving country). It can not be stressed too much, that the existence of a good system of communication for relay of information is essential to assure the migrant assistance beginning with his arrival. It is also through this means that at all times the migrant has the Church active in his welfare and this fortifies him with the knowledge that his faith contact in the receiving country is one of his first experiences. The general consensus of opinion is expressed by most diocesan directors that the information on arrivals received from national and international organs is insufficient most frequently, and does not enable them to arrange a suitable contact for work with the immigrant. This applies particularly in the cases of unsponsored or open placement immigrants where final destination is simply indicated in terms of a city or town, without any other accompanying address. Additional information would be most helpful in strengthening integration at this level. Two things demand co-ordination of activity immediately upon receipt of this information. First, arrange for proper reception services in the local station or airport for the incoming immigrants. Secondly, determine the parish of final destination indicated by the address supplied, and get the notices to the proper pastors, that newly arrived immigrants are destined for their parish.

When the migrant has reached that stage of his movement which will conclude his journey and begin his settlement in a new country, activity of the Church on his behalf must become more intense. To answer this challenge, a diocese must assess its resources in order that the best possible use is made of them to effect an acceptable and meaningful integration programme. A director must ask himself, (a) who should be called upon to assist him? (b) what areas are to be explored where collaboration will produce the best results? and (c) what should be developed within his territory to answer the needs of the immigrants? In receiving countries there is a positive need to co-ordinate the activities of all organizations or individuals who may or should be interested in the integration of immigrants. There are some who very quickly and readily can be identified as coming within this classification. There is the priest who is pastor of the parish of residence of the newcomer, the priests who are of the same nationality as the immigrant, and the national parishes serving their people in the community. Among the lay organizations we will find ethnic societies with

certain natural affinity anxious to help their fellow member recently arrived in the diocese. Also there will be other Catholic lay organizations expressing an interest and desire to be involved in working with the immigrant. All should be active in a diocese, but there is a positive need to co-ordinate their activities in order to most effectively aid the newcomer and to avoid confusion of action or, even worse, a rivalry over who will take responsibility in the field of immigration. The task on the diocesan level in this regard requires the setting up of a system of procedures and programmes that will consider a background of strong opinions and feelings as to what is necessary or best for the immigrant. In putting the resources to work to aid in integration we must keep in mind our ultimate goal is spiritual integration. This may be expressed as the time when the individual, without any regard to his ethnic origin or length of time in the country, can take his place in the life of the parish, receive the Sacraments and spiritual administrations of the priest in his parish on the same level and to the same degree as all other parishioners. At least in the initial stages of his settlement, the immigrant must be given the opportunity of contact with a priest who speaks his language. The question of confession, religious instruction, etc., cannot, in most instances, be answered by the priest in the territorial parish. Therefore, the Diocesan Director must co-ordinate the activity of the local pastor and that of the national priest who can serve the migrant for these purposes. There is no reason why these actions cannot exist simultaneously. If there is a significant number of any one ethnic group settled within the confines of the parish, the Director of Immigration should assist the pastor in obtaining the services of a priest of that language at regular intervals during the year for the purpose of confessions and instructions. It may be that a central location can best serve for this purpose, drawing the immigrants from several neighbouring parishes. Unless planning and assistance in this endeavour is given in a diocese, we will discover that a priest performing these duties may travel two hundred miles in a day for services in one parish and a few days later have to travel the same distance for an adjacent parish.

Thus, a great deal of valuable time and energy can be lost and it is only by co-ordination that a planned schedule for all ethnic priests serving in this capacity can be most effective in a diocese. If there is a national parish easily accessible to the migrant, he must be made aware of its existence and given the opportunity to assist at Mass, etc., in his own language church. As his integration progresses, the newcomer should gradually be brought into the spiritual and social life of his territorial parish. In the same way, involvement with ethnic, versus, parish societies and organizations is a gradual growth that will develop with healthy and happy results if there is some planning on the diocesan level.

The native peoples of a receiving country must be educated if they are going to assist the immigrant in his integration. They must learn how to accept the influx of arrivals into their midst in the spirit of true charity. There must be developed in them an understanding of the migrant and his problems. There must be a willingness to accept the immigrant as he is. They must have a realization of his ability, and at first, his inability, to move into the structural society of the community. We must not leave the migrant on his own or to his own people as their responsibility because as a member of the community he becomes a concern for all. We suggest a panel of trained speakers be made available at the diocesan level to carry out this very important and essential programme of education in our parishes.

These are some of the considerations that must underlie the various activities receiving direction and unification from the directors of immigration. By bringing together those working groups at a higher level than the parish, a director can involve all in the programming that will gradually knit the immigrant into the civil and religious life of the community. To accomplish this

task, a diocesan volunteer committee comprised of members of the lay organizations; a priests committee with representatives of both territorial and national parishes will aid the director considerably in preparing and implementing programmes that will consolidate interests on behalf of the migrant. It is on this level only that these groups can find a common ground of concern which is care of all souls in a diocese and a need to work as a unit for the good of faith and the Church as a whole. I have spent considerable time on this aspect of co-ordination because it is the keynote to success for integration. Unless each group has some established lines of communication in a common co-ordinator, there may be a great deal of activity on an individual basis but there will be no effective protection which will assure the salvation of the soul of the newcomer.

With the resources evaluated in the diocese and used in the best interests of the immigrant, let us now consider the various steps in reception and settlement aimed at accomplishing absorption and integration. What system should be used for reception of arrivals at destination points? Since at this stage of movement the parish destination is not usually known there is need to have direction of reception activity from the larger or over-all committees mentioned previously. This can be done by organizing diocesan reception teams who will be committed to meet all trains and planes carrying immigrants. In these teams will be ethnic representatives who will be called upon to serve as the various corresponding ethnic immigrants arrive. There should be common identification supplied to these volunteers so that the migrant will see the same Church insignia at inland points, as he saw, when met at ports of entry. This contact with the immigrant upon arrival is usually a very brief service, yet, it is another link in the faith contact during their movement. There are times when the volunteer receptionists can render real help to the migrant upon arrival. Experienced volunteers will give assistance in clearance and obtaining of baggage; act as interpreters with customs and immigration officials; contact sponsors who may not be on hand to receive them, etc. Many come into a diocese with no definite residence, having only the general area designated as final destination. If there is an immigration hall or hostel in operation immediate shelter can be offered to the migrant. There is a further advantage to the operation of a reception hostel in that it gives diocesan workers time to interview and prepare more complete information to be passed on to the pastor of the parish of residence. Whether a diocese has a hostel or not, the reception teams must be trained to be able to answer the need for immediate housing if it is required. This demand for immediate service can be facilitated by having previously cleared accommodation available for use at any time. There may be some costs involved in these instances but the diocese does not question its responsibility to meet these as part of their service to the new subjects. It is in reception activity that the ethnic groups can be extremely valuable and worthwhile contributions are made by them under the director who guides and co-ordinates their work.

The major portion of activity for integration must be accomplished on the parish level with the diocesan immigration office lending a supportive hand with information to assist parish committees. Upon receipt therefore, of notice of landing of immigrants, it is the duty of workers at this level to supply the parishes of destination with pertinent details on their newly arrived parishioners. Since the usual data obtainable at this time is simply a name and address, it is necessary to determine the actual parish for assignment as the next task of action for integration. A programme for parish visitation along accepted lines and procedures for conducting this contact with the immigrant must emanate from the diocesan level. The purpose of visiting teams set up in the parishes is outlined. The method of conducting the visit should follow a common accepted pattern. Details of information necessary to the newcomer is supplied to the

volunteers and prepared in writing in the various languages to be left with those who are visited. Parish visiting committees also have a representative on the diocesan volunteer committee. Reports should be made to the Diocesan office on visits to the immigrants. The parish priest is also given details and reports following the completed visits by his committee. Unless this work is co-ordinated on the diocesan level and follow-up on visits controlled, our immigrants may be left to their own devices and experience unnecessary hardships in their first steps toward integration. This parish visitation programme is admitted to be the most essential activity that will, more than anything else, protect the faith of the migrant. The first visit to him in his new parish setting will have lasting effects in his future life in the new country. It will guarantee placement of his children into our Catholic schools, give him an entry to his pastor and offer assistance even in a material way at a time when he needs moral support and encouragement. To quote the words of a Director in one of our receiving countries will sum up this activity for integration: "The first visit to the immigrant in his new parish is a very important one. It ought to take the nature of fraternal Christian Charity, affectionate and practical, and at the same time, it ought to suggest the solution of his spiritual and material problems.»

Since the ability, or lack of it, to speak the language of the receiving country normally determines the rate of assimilation and, later, integration of the immigrant, this barrier, if it exists, must be removed. Co-ordination of this activity for integration must also be found on the diocesan level. There should be a programme calling for formal language instruction with qualified teachers. It must be publicized with times and locations and made open to all immigrants. The operation of schools of basic English under Church auspices in a diocese is yet another way of impressing upon the newcomer the Church's concern for him and its anxiety to prepare him for life in his adopted country. There should be concern for the mothers of families who, without special attention, will be left behind, as husbands and children progress in new language learning. To meet this need, the diocese should establish special day-time mothers' classes with baby sitting services included. These may be held in parish halls or private homes on a block system. Volunteers can make a real contribution to the new women who now live in their parish and they are best aware of the vocabulary needs of a mother running a home in their community. As this programme of educational assistance develops it should go beyond the basic language needs and provide special technical and professional classes for more advanced pupils. There is room in this programme also for voice and enunciation classes especially for the immigrant who, with this assistance, could enter competitive fields of industry and business.

In the area of material assistance which is sometimes required for the needy immigrant, there must also be a co-ordination of activity. Certain needs can and should be met by the parish of residence, yet, there are other occasions when the demands cannot be fulfilled except by a more organized method of assistance formed at the diocesan level. There must be an understanding of the role of these two sources of material assistance. Often the processing of housing accommodation and even aid in furnishing such, is a direct action of the higher level, leaving basic needs of food, etc., to the parish societies. There can be no set rules stated for this area of activity for integration since this is also a question of using material resources available in a diocese where there must be a mutual understanding and working agreement reached through joint consideration. Whatever means or ways used, it must be accepted that a sound settlement programme is another activity to be directed on the diocesan level for integration. It has further extensions of service such as offering job placement, counselling services, special placement cases that the parishes may refer their immigrants for more specialized attention. These may be described as a centraliza-

tion of services to immigrants supplied at the diocesan level and made available to the parishes. There are times when the type of assistance indicated can not easily be obtained in the parish because of its limited resources and it needs to be able to call on its next level of organization for help which is the diocesan immigration office and properly one of its functions in this field.

« We all have the obligation of contributing to bringing about the reunion of the family in the country of immigration as soon as possible ». These words of a National Director in a receiving country express the need and reason for a family reunion programme on the diocesan level. There is no intention here of taking any sides or dealing with the question of separated families caused as a result of immigration. Rather, it is to acknowledge as a statement of fact — we in receiving countries do have separated families and what positive action must be instituted to breach the separation period by re-uniting under Church auspices families so divided as quickly as possible. Again, the co-ordination of this most important activity must take place on the diocesan level. Education of our Catholic people must include an awareness of this problem. Accurate information regarding facilities set up by the Church in a diocese by way of loan funds, etc., must be given to the immigrant upon arrival. No integration can be realized where there exists a broken family unit. The diocese must therefore not only supply information but also offer to the family member in its midst, trained people capable of assisting him with applications for the admission of the balance of the family, plans to assist in their settlement upon arrival, etc.

We must meet this challenge by having staff in diocesan offices versed in the technical aspects of applications and movements and make these services available to separated family members in the receiving country. Special attention should be paid to the information on landed immigrants and lists of possible family reunion cases compiled for immediate follow-up. Volunteers, or even a paid staff member, if the volume warrants it, should make personal contact with this category of immigrants in order to inform them of the immediate help to be offered in reuniting them with their families. In this area of activity we must be conscious of a special care that must be given by co-ordinated effort, in order to shorten family separation and to protect against the moral and social problems created by heads of families coming forward alone.

Finally, a word on co-ordination of activity as applied to refugee cases. Initial planning for their movement to a parish, reception and settlement arrangements, special follow-up and reports on these migrants must be controlled, directed and effected by the activity of the diocesan immigration office. The work of assisting in integration of refugees calls for particular attention on the parochial level with, at times, supporting aid from organizations and societies beyond the parish.

I would like to state two suggestions that have been submitted to me through the reports of dioceses in receiving countries. First, a request that more information from our counter-parts in sending countries be forwarded on departing immigrants. Secondly, an information service be given by International Catholic Migration Commission, to be added to the present directory published by it. This would contain moral, social and economic aspects of the various receiving countries and supplied for use in the overseas offices to prepare those coming forth for their new setting, diocese and parish.

To support the various things outlined in this paper as being very necessary in the task of co-ordination for integration on the diocesan level, Monsignor Crennan has expressed so well the reason and motive prompting this activity — « In seeking to co-ordinate on all levels, national, diocesan and parochial activities towards the integration of immigrants, the Church is motivated by the conviction that the most efficacious and comforting assistance is that which

reaches them through Church channels.» With the aid of sympathetic pastors whose work has the support of the national priests and that of the lay organizations, the migration committees are enabled to ensure that immigrants are put in the way of overcoming obstacles and difficulties inseparable from settlement and eventually in succeeding to re-establish themselves in security and comfort and what is more important, with the least possible danger to the salvation of their soul in the transplanting process involved in migration.

Résumé — Summary

KOORDINIERUNG DER INTEGRATIONSARBEIT IN DER DIÖZESE

von Pater Claude J. Mulvihill

Zunächst bemerkt der Vortragende, dass die Tätigkeit zugunsten der Integration in einer Diözese nie darauf abgezielt sein sollte, den Integrationsprozess durch irgendwelche Druckmassnahmen gegenüber den Einwanderern zu beschleunigen. Die Erfahrung hat gezeigt, dass die Koordinierung der Arbeit vor allem auf moralisch und psychologisch gesunden Programmen beruhen sollte. Das Ziel des katholischen Beitrag bei der Integration ist, dem Einwanderer die nötige Unterstützung zu geben, damit er sich mit geringeren Schwierigkeiten allmählich in das bürgerliche und religiöse Leben seiner neuen Gemeinschaft eingliedern kann.

Der erste Schritt bei der Koordinierung der Kräfte ist die Schaffung eines guten Verbindungssystem für die Vermittlung von Information, damit der Einwanderer gleich bei seiner Ankunft betreut wird. Es ist für ihn sehr wichtig zu wissen, dass eine seiner ersten Erfahrungen in der neuen Heimat der Kontakt mit der Kirche sein wird. Sobald die Ankunft angegeben ist, kann sich die Koordinierung auf zwei Gebiete erstrecken: 1) der Empfang am Bahnhof oder Flugplatz; 2) nachdem der Bestimmungsort festgesetzt, die Uebermittlung von Angaben an den Ortspfarrer.

In der Anfangsperiode seiner Ansiedlung muss der Einwanderer Gelegenheit haben, mit einem Priester seiner Muttersprache in Verbindung zu treten, denn das Problem der Beichte, des Religionsunterrichts usw. kann meistens nicht vom Ortspfarrer gelöst werden. Daher muss der Diözesandirektor die Tätigkeit des Orts Pfarrers und die des Nationalpriesters koordinieren. Ein sorgfältiges Arbeitsprogramm für alle Nationalpriester der Diözese kann dabei grosse Dienste leisten. Wenn einmal die Integration fortgeschritten ist, wird der Einwanderer dann allmählich in das geistige und soziale Leben seiner territorialen Pfarre eingeführt.

LA COORDINACIÓN DE LAS ACTIVIDADES EN MATERIA DE INTEGRACIÓN EN EL NIVEL DIOCESANO.

Por el R.P. Claude J. Mulvihill

En primer lugar el orador hace notar que las actividades diocesanas en materia de integración no deberían nunca tratar de someter al inmigrante a una influencia encaminada a apresurar indebidamente el proceso de integración. La experiencia ha demostrado, desde el punto de vista moral y psicológico, que la base de toda coordinación de actividades son los programas bien dirigidos. El fin de la participación católica en el proceso de integración, consiste en hacer que el inmigrante se beneficie de la asistencia necesaria, para que se adapte progresivamente, y con los menores inconvenientes, a la vida civil y religiosa de su nueva comunidad.

La primera etapa de la coordinación en el plan diocesano es la creación de un buen sistema de comunicación que permita reunir la información necesaria para que el inmigrante sea asistido desde su llegada al nuevo país. Es muy importante que el inmigrante sepa que una de sus primeras experiencias en el país de acogida es su contacto con la Iglesia. Hay dos

cosas que exigen una acción coordinada inmediatamente después de recibir la información sobre la llegada del inmigrante: en primer lugar, la organización de la acogida del inmigrante en la estación o en el aeropuerto local y en segundo lugar, averiguar a qué parroquia corresponde el punto de destino indicado en las señas, para anunciarle la llegada del inmigrante.

En la primera fase de su asentamiento, debe darse al inmigrante la posibilidad de tomar contacto con un sacerdote que hable su lengua. El problema de la confesión, de la instrucción religiosa, etc., no puede resolverse, la mayor parte de las veces, por el sacerdote de la parroquia territorial. Por consiguiente, el director diocesano debe coordinar la acción del clero local y del capellán étnico que pueda ayudar al inmigrante en este problema. Es recomendable coordinar un horario para los capellanes étnicos al servicio de la diócesis. A medida que la integración del inmigrante progresa, será éste requerido para que participe de modo gradual en la vida espiritual y social de la parroquia territorial.

La mayor parte de la acción con miras a la integración debe cumplirse en la escala parroquial. Una de las actividades más eficaces para profeger la fe de los inmigrantes es el programa de visitas parroquiales. El orador concluye presentando dos proposiciones de orden práctico, destinadas a facilitar la labor de integración.

LA COORDINATION DES ACTIVITÉS EN MATIÈRE D'INTÉGRATION SUR LE PLAN DIOCÉSAIN

par le Rév. Claude Mulvihill

L'orateur souligne, tout d'abord, que les activités diocésaines en matière d'intégration ne devraient jamais tendre à soumettre l'immigrant à une pression en vue de hâter indûment le processus d'intégration. L'expérience a montré du point de vue moral et psychologique, que des programmes bien dirigés de base de toute coordination des activités. Le but de la participation catholique dans le processus d'intégration est de faire bénéficier l'immigrant de toute l'assistance nécessaire, afin qu'il s'adapte progressivement, et avec le moins d'inconvénients possible, à la vie civile et religieuse de sa nouvelle communauté.

La première étape dans la coordination de l'action sur le plan diocésain est la création d'un bon système de communication pour réunir les renseignements afin que l'immigrant soit aidé dès son arrivée dans le nouveau pays. Le fait que l'immigrant sache que le contact avec son Eglise dans le pays d'accueil est une de ses premières expériences, est très important. Deux choses exigent la coordination de l'action aussitôt après le reçu des renseignements sur l'arrivée de l'immigrant: d'abord, l'organisation de l'accueil à la gare ou l'aéroport local et ensuite, déterminer la paroisse de destination finale indiquée par l'adresse communiquée et avertir le clergé de celle-ci.

Dans la première phase de son établissement, l'immigrant doit avoir la possibilité d'entrer en relations avec un prêtre parlant sa langue. Le problème de la confession, de l'instruction religieuse, etc. ne peut souvent pas être résolu par le prêtre de la paroisse territoriale. C'est pourquoi, le Directeur diocésain doit coordonner l'action du clergé local et du prêtre ethnique qui peut aider l'immigrant dans ce domaine. La coordination d'un horaire pour tous les prêtres ethniques desservant le diocèse est hautement recommandable. Au fur et à mesure que l'intégration de l'immigrant progresse, il sera graduellement appelé à participer à la vie spirituelle et sociale de la paroisse territoriale.

La plus grande part de l'action en vue de l'intégration doit s'accomplir au niveau paroissial et le programme de visites paroissiales est une des activités reconnues parmi les plus efficaces pour protéger la foi des immigrants. L'orateur conclut en présentant deux propositions d'ordre pratique, destinées à faciliter l'oeuvre d'intégration.